



CHILD CARE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) FOR PROVIDERS

TOPIC	QUESTION	ANSWER
Staying open or reopening	If I did not complete the COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Provider Application by the March 31 deadline, what does that mean for my child care business?	Your business is closed effective April 1, 2020 if you did not complete the application by the deadline. You may reopen your business at a later date if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete the COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Provider Application at least two business days prior to reopening;• attest to being able to meet the health, safety, and operational guidelines NC DHHS has established;• and receive approval from DCDEE prior to reopening.
	I am not ready to reopen my child care facility on April 1, but I may wish to reopen at a later date in April or May. Can I reopen my child care facility in the middle of April or in May if I do not complete the COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Provider Application by April 1?	Yes, you may reopen your facility after April 1. You will need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• complete the COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Provider Application at least two business days prior to reopening;• attest to being able to meet the health, safety, and operational guidelines NC DHHS has established;• and receive approval from DCDEE prior to reopening.
	Are you mandating closures of child care facilities?	No, we are not mandating closures. We are allowing child care providers to apply to stay open if they complete the COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Provider Application and agree to meet the requirements outlined within the application.
	Are you mandating child care centers to reopen?	No. Our goal is to have sufficient supply of child care for our essential workforce, but we recommend you make the decision that is in the best interest of your staff and your community. Before you make the choice to open or reopen, we ask that you make sure you can meet the health, safety and operational guidelines.
	On the COVID-19 Child Care Provider Survey , do I need to report our vacancies on the weekends if we are not typically open on the weekend?	No. You only need to fill out the provider survey on days you are typically open.

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	On the COVID-19 Child Care Provider Survey , which children should I report attendance for?	Please use the Provider Survey to report attendance for <u>all children</u> who come to your facility that day, including those receiving regular subsidy, emergency subsidy, or private pay. We use this information to understand how many available spots your facility has when connecting parents who call the child care hotline.
Who can I serve?	What is the definition of an essential worker?	The full definition of essential workers can be found in Executive Order 121 . The definition includes workers such as emergency and first responders, hospital staff, front-line healthcare providers, nursing and adult group home staff, child care program staff, food service staff and others working to keep our communities safe and healthy as we respond to COVID-19.
	If my child care program completes the application and remains open or reopens after April 1, 2020, can I continue to serve currently enrolled children who wish to be served?	<p>You may only serve currently enrolled children if their parents/caregivers are considered essential workers, according to Executive Order 121, or if the child is receiving child welfare services, is homeless, or in unstable or unsafe living arrangements. Parents who are not essential workers should stay home if they are able and keep their children at home to minimize spread of the disease.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the family to self-identify as an essential worker. We are not expecting child care providers to determine if a parent/caregiver is an essential worker.</p>
	If my child care program remains open or reopens after April 1, 2020, can I provide child care to children whose parents are not essential workers?	<p>No. Per Executive Order 121, parents or caregivers who are not essential workers should stay home and keep their children at home if they are able to do so.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the family to self-identify as an essential worker. We are not expecting child care providers to determine if a parent/caregiver is an essential worker.</p>
	If my child care program remains open or reopens after April 1, 2020, can I serve any formerly served children?	Open slots should only be made available to children of essential workers or other priority children (those who are receiving child welfare services, who are homeless, or in unstable or unsafe living arrangements). However, child care programs that remain open can choose not to accept new children and only continue serving currently enrolled children of essential workers or priority children.
	Do both parents need to be identified as essential workers to fit guidelines for attending childcare or just one?	If there is a parent or caregiver in the household who is not an essential worker and is able to stay home with the child, they should do so to minimize the spread of the disease.
	Is there a minimum or maximum number of children of essential workers that we must accept?	No, there is no minimum or maximum number of children of essential workers you must accept. We hope child care programs will choose to take on more children so essential workers have adequate child care options, but we are not requiring providers to serve additional children.

	I am a child care program that serves children under 5. One of my families has essential workers with children who are both under 5 and school-age. Can I serve both children at my facility so the family doesn't have to find two child care sites for their children?	It depends. If your child care program is licensed to provide care to school-age children, then you may serve both the child under 5 years of age and the school-age child.																						
	If a parent who is an essential worker wants to enroll their child at a center that is open, must they go through the emergency child care hotline or can they go directly to the center they choose?	The parent can go directly to the child care center. However, the emergency child care hotline receives daily updates from child care providers and will have the most updated information about whether a provider is open and is accepting new children.																						
Parent Emergency Child Care Financial Assistance	Which parents need to fill out the COVID-19 Parent Application for Financial Assistance for Emergency Child Care ?	Parents or caregivers who need financial assistance for emergency child care should fill out the COVID-19 Parent Application for Financial Assistance for Emergency Child Care if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are essential workers,• have an emergency child care need,• have no other child care options,• have a household income below 300 percent of the poverty line.																						
	What are the income levels for 300 percent of the poverty line or below?	<table><tr><td>Persons in Household</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Income Limit</td><td>\$51,720</td><td>\$65,160</td><td>\$78,600</td><td>\$92,040</td><td>\$105,480</td><td>\$118,920</td><td>\$132,360</td></tr></table> <p>This information is also in the COVID-19 Parent Application for Financial Assistance for Emergency Child Care form. For household size greater than 8 people, add \$4,480 for each additional person starting with the 9th person. Households with income above the indicated limits can still receive emergency child care; they <u>do not need to fill out the financial assistance application form</u> and will be charged full price by the provider.</p>							Persons in Household	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Income Limit	\$51,720	\$65,160	\$78,600	\$92,040	\$105,480	\$118,920	\$132,360
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If I choose to accept new children whose parents are essential workers and are requesting financial assistance for emergency child care, do I need to determine whether they are eligible for assistance?	No, we do not expect the child care providers to determine whether the family is eligible for financial assistance. Providers only need to ensure the Parent Application form is complete and store the Parent Application (guidance about this process is here). Contact the DCDEE Subsidy Unit at 919-814-6380 for further assistance if a parent or caregiver answers yes to one of the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• having assets greater than \$1 million,• needing child care for more than 55 hours a week,• or being disqualified from the NC Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program.																							

	Can child care staff apply for the emergency child care subsidy program for their own children?	Yes. According to Executive Order 121 , child care staff are considered essential workers. As long as child care staff meet the other criteria on the Parent Application form, they may apply for financial assistance for emergency child care.
	When will I receive these emergency subsidy reimbursements?	<p>Payments for the Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program will be made as follows (more information in the COVID-19 Child Care Payment Policies):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payments for April services will be paid on May 15th • Payments for May services will be paid on June 12th <p>Payments for Emergency Child Care Subsidy will be based on attendance of children that month. Attendance should be submitted by the 5th day of the following month to ensure timely reimbursement. These emergency subsidy payments will be paid outside of the NC FAST system.</p> <p>In order to get reimbursed, providers will need to submit attendance for children receiving Emergency Child Care Subsidy in the Provider Portal for Emergency Child Care Subsidy. Providers can use this job aid to log into the portal and add children for whom they have received completed Parent Applications for Financial Assistance for Emergency Child Care.</p> <p>DCDEE is currently developing the functionality to track attendance of children, and providers will receive further guidance when this is available. In the meantime, providers should manually keep track of attendance from children receiving Emergency Child Care Subsidy. We have provided a weekly child attendance log to assist providers in tracking.</p>
School-based child care sites	If I am operating a school-based emergency child care site for school-age children, do I need to fill out the COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Provider Application?	No, there is a different form. School-based emergency child care providers that are not licensed should complete the Emergency Child Care Registration Form .
	If I am operating a school-based emergency child care site for school-age children, can our families access financial support for child care and can our staff access bonus payments?	At this time, financial assistance for emergency child care is limited to essential workers whose children are enrolled in a licensed child care facility. Similarly, at this time, bonus payments are limited to staff working in licensed child care facilities that are open after April 1, 2020.
	If I am operating a school-based emergency child care site for school-age children, do I need to follow the health and safety guidelines?	School-based child care sites providing care to school-age children should follow the same health, screening, and safety guidelines as licensed child care providers to minimize the spread of the disease.

Religious sponsored sites	I am a GS-110 religious sponsored child care facility. Do I need to accept subsidy and provide bonus payments?	No. GS-110 religious sponsored child care facilities are not required to accept subsidy payments from DCDEE or pay the state-funded bonus payments to staff, but may choose to do so if they wish. The COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Provider Application addresses those concerns.
	I am a GS-110 religious sponsored child care facility. Do I need to follow the updated health, safety, and operational guidelines NC DHHS has established and apply to stay open or reopen using the COVID-19 Emergency Child Care Provider Application ?	Yes. Because you are a regulated facility you must commit to meeting the guidelines and you must apply to stay open or to reopen.
Subsidy payments	If my program has closed, will we receive subsidy payments for April and May 2020?	Yes. DCDEE will make Subsidized Child Care Program payments to ALL subsidized child care providers for March, April, and May service months, regardless of whether the facility is open or closed. The payment amount for March, April, and May will be consistent with the March payments for February services for all providers (as recorded in NC FAST). See COVID-19 Child Care Payment Policies for more details about Subsidized Child Care Program payments for April and May.
	When can I expect to receive subsidy payments for April and May? Will parent fees be included?	Subsidized child care program payments and parent copayments will be paid on a modified schedule to support child care programs during this crisis as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment for March services will be paid on April 9th • Payment for April services will be paid on April 30th • Payment for May services will be paid on May 29th See COVID-19 Child Care Payment Policies for more details about Subsidized Child Care Program payments for April and May.
	Do children need to attend any days in April and/or May to receive payment based on February attendance, or will providers be paid in April and May based on families' continued enrollment without regard to attendance?	No, children do not need to physically attend the child care facility in April or May for a provider to receive the subsidy payment. However, additional programmatic guidance for NC PreK programs is currently under development.
	Are there qualifications parents must meet to have their copays for April and May waived?	We are asking that you not collect parent copayments for any child that is receiving subsidized care. There are no parent fees for the new Emergency Child Care Subsidy program.

	Will there be a change to the “blended rate” for school-age children now that full-time care is being provided for more months than the previous formula took into consideration?	In April and May, DCDEE will pay child care providers serving school-age children the difference between the blended rate and the full-time rate. The actual attendance of school-age children recorded by child care providers in April and May will be used to calculate the difference between the blended rate and full-time rate. This payment for school-age children for services provided in April and May will be paid mid-month (May 15 th and June 12 th).
	If a facility is not currently participating in the subsidy program, are they eligible to accept families from the Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program for essential workers?	Yes, facilities that are not currently participating in the subsidized child care program are eligible to accept families from the Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program for essential workers. A provider does not have to participate in the subsidized child care to be eligible for the Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program for essential workers. The provider will need to ensure they have a business NCID to be able to log into the Provider Portal. (There is a job aid available to help providers to navigate the Provider Portal.)
	If an essential worker is on a waiting list for subsidy, could they apply for this emergency subsidy? If an essential worker is currently enrolled in a program and paying privately, would they qualify for emergency subsidy?	Yes, an essential worker who is on the subsidized child care waiting list and is currently paying privately, may complete the COVID-19 Parent Application for Financial Assistance for Essential Workers . The parent/caregiver would need to attest to the following criteria: 1) they are an essential worker, 2) they meet the income guidelines (at or below 300% of federal poverty level), and 3) they have no other options for child care.
	Will one and two star facilities or facilities that do not currently accept children on subsidy be able to receive subsidy payments for the children of essential workers?	Yes, all licensed child care facilities regardless of star rating are eligible to participate in the Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program for essential workers.
	Why are family providers being paid approximately \$300 less than centers for each child?	The payment rates for the Emergency Child Care Subsidy Program are based on the state averages for 75 th percentile of the 2018 Market Rate Study with an additional \$200 supplement. The rates for Family Child Care Homes are typically lower than the rates for centers.

Bonus payments	Are the bonus payment amounts of \$300 for teachers and \$200 for staff and administrators per facility or per staff person? Who is included?	<p>All bonus payments are per individual teacher or staff member. The \$300 per month applies to full-time teachers of all levels, and the \$200 per month applies to all full-time non-teaching staff at a child care facility, including directors, administrators, cooks, janitors and other workers.</p> <p>Part-time workers (who work 20 hours a week or less) are also eligible for bonus payments of \$150 per month for teachers and \$100 per month for non-teaching staff.</p> <p>Employees must be working on-site to be eligible for the bonus payment.</p> <p>See COVID-19 Child Care Payment Policies for more details about bonus payments for April and May.</p>
	If I remain open or reopen after April 1, 2020, how should I provide bonus payments to staff who are not present for the full month?	If an employee is absent from work for more than ten days during a month, the bonus payment will be prorated using a daily rate. <i>(To calculate the daily rate, divide the bonus amount by 21.67 then multiply that by the number of days the employee worked.)</i>
	Is there a minimum number of hours that a staff person should work each week to qualify for the bonus?	There is no minimum number of hours a staff person would need to work to qualify for a bonus payment. However, if the staff member works 20 hours or less, he or she would be considered a part-time worker and would receive half the bonus pay amount of full-time workers (\$150 per month for teachers and \$100 per month for non-teaching staff).
	Do taxes need to be paid on the bonus pay?	Bonus payments are subject to payroll taxes, which would be partially paid by the employee through payroll reductions and partially paid by the provider.
	Are bonuses available for family child care homes?	Yes, bonus payments are available to employees who work at family child care homes and child care centers.